

FEMA Releases Interactive Online IPAWS Toolkit

Release Date: November 30, 2021

WASHINGTON -- FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate released an interactive, web-based version of the [Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Program Planning Toolkit](#) today. Building on the success of the five-resource toolkit released in late 2020, the new free online tool will assist new and existing alerting authorities across the country to create and support an effective program for alerts, warnings and notifications. An effective alerting plan helps communities because authorities can reach the public quickly during an emergency, when minutes matter and can save lives.

[IPAWS](#) is FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#), to radio and television via the [Emergency Alert System](#) and on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio. More than 1,600 state, local, tribal and territorial authorities are able to send alerts over IPAWS.

FEMA and DHS worked to identify gaps in existing IPAWS alerting resources available to alerting authorities. A result of that partnership is the toolkit's enhancement into a new step-by-step resource that includes:

- An alerting plan template creator that allows authorities to create a comprehensive alerting plan, including basic information and staffing plans, before a crisis, an alert message template creator that walks a user through the research-based recommended format.
- Frequently asked questions, fact sheets and additional resources shared by public safety agencies that will assist users with creating their own plans.

The new toolkit was produced based on recent innovative changes to technology and was derived from the collection of successful practices and lessons learned from hundreds of data points, including more than 200 emergency managers,



public information officers, alerting originators and experts, as well as administrators.

The new toolkit will assist public safety agencies in developing comprehensive alerting plans that minimize alerting delay challenges; plan for future alerts, warnings and notifications enhancements; facilitate interoperability across different technologies; and improve information sharing among emergency management and public safety officials.



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